DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 449 675 FL 026 574

AUTHOR	Lo Bianco, Joseph
TITLE	Training Teachers of Language and Culture. Language Australia Research Policy and Practice Papers.
INSTITUTION	Language Australia, Melbourne (Victoria).
ISBN	ISBN-1-876768-00-2
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	29p.; This booklet is based on a presentation given at the National Conference on Teacher Education (Maharagama, Sri Lanka, November 4-5, 1999).
AVAILABLE FROM	Language Australia, GPO Box 372F, Melbourne, VIC 3001; Tel.. 03-9926-4779; Fax: 03-9926-4780; Internet: http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/language-australia
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Secondary Education; English (Second Language); Ethnic Groups; Foreign Countries; Language Attitudes; Language Minorities; Language Planning; *Language Teachers; *Multilingualism; Official Languages; *Professional Development; *Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; Singhalese; Tamil; Teacher Education; Teacher Educator Education; Uncommonly Taught Languages
IDENTIFIERS	Sri Lanka

ABSTRACT

This booklet posits that language teacher education is an important component of nation building in a multilingual community. Communication is a crucial component of nation building, and teachers play a key role in the creation, renewal, and re-negotiation of the nation and its bonds, the state and its resources. This booklet discusses the training of language teachers in Sri Lanka within the World Bank Teacher Education and Teacher Deployment Project Package Two. This document sets out a plan for trilingual competence specifically to promote peaceful coexistence. It is divided into five parts. Part one is "Teacher Education and the Making of a Nation." Part two is "National Policy Context" and is divided into five sections: "The Constitution," "The Reforms in General Education," "The National Goals of Schooling," "Sinhala and Tamil as Second Languages," and "Sinhala/Tamil in Schools and Colleges of Education." Part three is "Relation Between Language and Intercultural Competence." It has one section, "Teaching Culture in Language," as well as sections on three levels of competence--"Cultural Recognition," "Intercultural Awareness," "Multicultural Creativity." Part four is "How to Train Teachers of Interculturalism" and includes four sections "Ethnography," "Empathy," "Content Knowledge," and "The Conceptualization of 'Language'." (Contains 4 references.) (KFT)

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TRAINING TEACHERS OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Joseph Lo Bianco

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LANGUAGE AUSTRALIA

THE NATIONAL LANGUAGES AND LITERACY INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

TRAINING TEACHERS OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Presentation to the
National Conference on Teacher Education

4 & 5 November 1999
National Institute of Education
Maharagama, Sri Lanka

by
Joseph Lo Bianco

Chief Executive
Language Australia:
The National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia,
c/- The Australian National University Canberra, ACT 0200

Visiting Professor of Education
University of Melbourne

International Consultant
Second Language II
World Bank Technical Assistance Project for Sri Lanka
Teacher Education and Teacher Deployment Project
ITC Australia and MG Consultancies Sri Lanka

Published by

Language Australia
Melbourne

Training Teachers
of
Language and Culture

Prof. Joseph Lo Bianco

ISBN: 1 876768 00 2

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All enquiries in relation to this publication should be addressed to:
Publications and Clearinghouse Manager
Language Australia
GPO Box 372F
Melbourne VIC 3001

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1 TEACHER EDUCATION AND THE MAKING OF A NATION

The training of teachers is one of the most important but least appreciated public policy endeavours in any country.

Although teachers' work is framed by the expectations of society and the strictures of curriculum and employment, they are not without considerable autonomy. Teachers provide moral, cultural, technological and communicative fabric to national structure. And (though they are far from being able to make and shape society) teachers are critical *mediators* between the knowledge, skills, behaviour and values that are prized in the present and those which are selected to be transmitted to future generations. This process of mediation between patterns of the here-and-now and the future involves making selections for inclusion in curricula, therefore validating and valuing some characteristics of the present above others, so that the future can be based on improvements over the past.

Curriculum therefore is a design for the future and teachers are society's appointed builders.

If curriculum mediates between the present society and possible future society then teachers are the *mediators of this mediation.* It is through teaching, and therefore through teachers, that society makes an investment in its future stocks of knowledge and patterns of culture. These selections from the present, including our present understandings of *history* (i.e. our theory of the past) are transfers to the future that teachers effect. If we want to predict the future we will be more accurate if we gaze at today's school curricula and teacher education than if we gaze at the stars or into crystal balls.

Teachers inscribe what society values into the grey-matter and the hearts of the young; an inscription of future-kind.

Making selections from the vast possibilities that exist in social studies, geography, history, arts and music, and language involves making judgments on the present and devising a plan for the future. In an era of intense global interconnectedness, in which fierce international competition will be the order of economic relations among largely free-trading nations, most countries have identified the investment that they make in public education as a critical variable in their future human capital.

A country is an amalgam of something we call the State and something we call the Nation. I like to think of the State and Nation as being arranged along

vertical and horizontal axes. The State is the vertical axis and consists of public administration and distribution of the goods and services of the polity; while the nation is the horizontal network of attachments, shared knowledge and other attributes that bind and connect the people. The horizontal axis does not require the people to be similar, of identical ancestry, in fact, modern countries are all increasingly multi-ethnic. In the famous phrase of the American researcher of nationalism, Benedict Anderson, the contemporary nation is an *'imagined community'*.

Among the 'goods and services' that a state distributes to its people there are some non-tangible 'goods and services'; cultural and social capital, the stock of non-material symbols and tokens of belonging which form the nation's bonds and affinities. An indispensable part of that symbolic and cultural capital is the communication capability of the society. The multilingual and multicultural future of all societies will can already be seen in the curricula of most countries which are making cultural and linguistic diversity, and nations forming around respecting differences within unity, as central themes in public education.

Teachers play a key role in the creation, renewal and re-negotiation of the nation and its bonds, the state and its resources. In this they are not independent agents. Teachers are created by institutions of the society, and hence the preparation of teachers is of major significance in imagining new possibilities, especially in times of stress and conflict.

In this paper I shall discuss the training of language teachers within the project of the World Bank Teacher Education and Teacher Deployment Project Package Two, the National Goals for Education for Sri Lanka and the Reforms to General Education. The goal set out in these documents is for trilingual competence specifically for "peaceful co-existence".

Sometimes students anticipate the kind of society curriculum designers plan for them.

I quote a 14 year old boy as evidence:

> *"Just as much as Tamil is my mother tongue I want Sinhala to be my father tongue. To be clever, I must know English too."*

A fourteen year old girl told me:

> *"In future we will be one Sri Lankans and we must communicate. For this I want Sinhalese, English and Tamil".*

Sri Lankan trilingualism will depend educators and teacher educators allowing children like these to realise their idealism.

2 NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

To discuss the training of language and culture teachers we must make reference to policy.

Does Sri Lanka have a National Language Education Policy that can guide teacher educators? Logically, such a policy would contain references to the status of languages, and a section setting out the cultural and linguistic objectives. By contrasting the status and objectives with current practice we could derive a plan of action.

While several elements of an explicit national language policy can indeed be found these are scattered across different official documents and there is a lack of a coordinated and coherent single national language education policy.

These references to language policy are in the annual reports, regulations and announcements made by the Commission of Official Languages and the Department of Official Languages (these are not considered in the present paper). Discussed below are the Constitution of Sri Lanka; the National Goals for Schooling; and the National Education Commission's Reforms to General Education.

I shall call these three the framing documents and as we shall see they contain within them the status, broad principles and wide objectives of Sri Lanka's national language education policy.

2.1 THE CONSTITUTION

The status of languages is clearly set out in the national constitution. The clauses in the constitution that relate to language, and the language categories that are named, reflect a long and remarkable history of language officialisation.

The broad phases have been English-Only under colonial rule, Sinhala, Tamil and English between 1944 and 1956, Sinhala-Only from 1956-1978, Sinhala and Tamil with English from 1978 and Sinhala, Tamil as co-Official and co-National, with English as Link Language, from 1987 (de Silva 1998; D. Official Languages 1992. Commission of Official Languages 1989).

The impetus for the present phase of language compromise and reconciliation derives specifically from the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987.

The terms of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord of 1987 specifically stated that the official languages of Sri Lanka would be designated as Sinhala, Tamil and English (Section 2.18 Indo-Sri Lankan Accord) but the resulting legal status of

Official and National are reserved for only Sinhala and Tamil. English is titled Link Language. This is set out in Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. The relevant clauses state:

'Section 18-
(i) The Official Language of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala
(ii) Tamil shall also be an Official Language
(iii) English shall be the link language"

Section 19- Sinhala and Tamil shall be the National Languages of Sri Lanka"

Article 21 entitles a person to be educated through the medium of either national language including to university level. So, the first part of a policy, considerations of status are set out in the Constitution which not only guarantees the legal right of Sinhala and Tamil in public administration but also guarantees the right to education in these languages to University level.

2.2 THE REFORMS IN GENERAL EDUCATION

The next element of a language policy would concern the objectives. Under the Reforms in General Education (RGE) issued by the National Education Commission there are some references to Sinhala and Tamil as **second** languages. The most explicit reference is under Section 2.3 Quality Improvement in Education; Junior Secondary Stage of Education where it is stated:

> *" The teaching of second National Language, i.e. Sinhala for Tamil speaking students and Tamil for Sinhala speaking students will also be introduced at this level as and when teachers are available."*
> *(NEC 1997:11).*

The only other direct reference to Sinhala and Tamil as second languages is in Section 2.4 *Senior Secondary Stage of Education*- which refers principally to the two year (Grades 10 and 11) period which comprises the G.C.E (OL). Optional subjects have been added to the previous arrangement in which there was a common and compulsory curriculum. In the language area *First Language* and *English* are listed as 'core subjects' while *Sinhala/Tamil as a Second Language* has been listed among 7 'optional subjects' from which students may select up to three. No mention is made of the second national language for the G.C.E (AL).

There is an extensive section (2.7) of the RGE report which deals with *Improvement to English Language Teaching in Schools.* The overall aim of these improvements is to offer 'up-graded opportunities for pupils island-wide for equal access to English for comprehension and communication' (p 14) adducing employment, and 'advancement' as the main expected outcomes.

Section 3 of the RGE deals with *Teacher Education.* Appropriate references to English are not matched however by any reference to Sinhala and Tamil as second languages.

The provisions for Sinhala and Tamil as second languages in the RGE have been greatly extended by the September press statements issued by the President of Sri Lanka and the Minister for Education when they announced the extension from 2000 of the second language initiative into primary schools[1].

In summary, the Reforms in General Education (and their extension in September 1999) establish the learning of English, Sinhala and Tamil as key goals of public education within a strong framework of improving ethnic relations, aiming for 'peaceful co-existence' and projecting a future identity of Sri Lankans as being trilingual.

However, English and the second national language are not brought into a single coherent plan for overall *second language education,* nor is the second language linked to first language, nor is literacy in the first and subsequent languages connected. English is treated separately from the two mother tongues when in fact many benefits of coordination and reinforcement would result from thinking about them as part of an overall trilingual education effort. Many advantages would emerge from having a consistently applied and coherent approach to language education.

2.3 THE NATIONAL GOALS OF SCHOOLING

These provisions within the RGE are bolstered by the spirit of the National Goals for Schooling which are relevant to the second language initiative. The second national language is framed as an idea for peaceful co-existence, the principal objective is not one of grammar, or of communicative competence (the traditional kinds of preoccupations for second language teachers) but rather as a contribution to national reconciliation and the making of peace. Specifically the following National Goals give prominence to this goal:

- The achievement of **National Cohesion, National Integrity and National Unity.**

- The establishment of a pervasive pattern of **Social Justice**.
- The active partnership in National Building Activities should ensure the nurturing of a continuous **sense of Deep and Abiding Concern for One Another**"

The Constitution and documents of the Official Languages Department and Commission establish the right to *first language use* and the right to an education in the mother tongues of Sri Lankans. The Reforms to General Education further establish a requirement of *reciprocal bilingualism* in Swabhasha. And, finally, the Reforms upgrade and establish communicative command of English as a common additional language.

Therefore the collective effect of all these provisions is an *implied* national language policy for linguistic education which is as follows.

LANGUAGE STATUS
Formal Parity of Sinhala & Tamil
Special Status for English as Shared, Additional & Vehicular Language

OVERARCHING OBJECTIVE
National Reconciliation
Sinhala and Tamil as Demolects[2] and English as Metalect[3]

IMPLEMENTATION GOALS
Sinhala and Tamil in Public Administration & Complete Languages of Instruction
English as Additional Language in Administration & Common Second Language in Education

EDUCATION IMPLICATIONS
Mother Tongue Instruction > Mother Tongue Literacy + English as a Second Language> Literacy in English + Acquisition of Second National Language.

The kinds of language outcomes that are implied in policy are elaborated in the following diagrams.

Sinhalese students

	Sinhala	English	Tamil
Time and medium	Full medium of instruction and examination	5 hrs weekly, primary to secondary to 'A' levels, some possible immersion	2 hrs secondary (from 2000 primary also) to 'O' levels, some possible immersion
Oral language	Academic	Communicative part academic	Communicative
Literacy	Sinhala literacy, literature & language arts	English Literacy & Literature	Learning script & limited reading
Socio - cultural	Mother tongue & identity culture	Second language, mainly instrumental goals	Intercultural, mainly integrative goals

Tamil students

	Tamil	English	Tamil
Time and medium	Full medium of instruction and examination	5 hrs weekly, primary to secondary to 'A' levels, some possible immersion	2 hrs secondary (from 2000 primary also) to 'O' levels, some possible immersion
Oral language	Academic	Communicative	Communicative
Literacy	Tamil literacy, literature & language arts	English Literacy & Literature	Learning script & limited reading
Socio - cultural	Mother tongue & identity culture	Second language, mainly instrumental goals	Intercultural, mainly integrative goals

In effect the Reforms in General Education, the September 1999 extension to these Reforms and the formal legal status of languages commit Sri Lankan schools and therefore the National Colleges of Education to offer a policy of *biliterate bilingualism within (partial) trilingualism.*

2.4 SINHALA AND TAMIL AS SECOND LANGUAGES

The teaching and learning of the national languages as second languages has had a complex and at times difficult history.

A decision to teach Tamil children Sinhala as a second language and Sinhalese children Tamil was taken in 1977. Some schools commenced almost immediately to teach the two languages. The program was governed by a belief that 'national unity' would be enhanced through mutual bilingualism in Swabhasha. Most of the small number of schools that had responded to the initiative discontinued their programs after about one year (ICES 1990).

The next stimulus to the teaching of Sinhala and Tamil as national languages was the 13th and 16th Amendments to the Constitution. The present effort for teaching of Sinhala and Tamil as second languages is the educational manifestation of these constitutional amendments.

The second language initiative has always been inspired by the ideal of respecting ethnic diversity and multiculturalism within a framework of national unity, in other words traditional language objectives, grammar, vocabulary, speech etc have been secondary to a much deeper national mission. This will mean that training teachers of language and culture in Sri Lankan education will require an approach sensitive to these overarching goals.

2.5 SINHALA /TAMIL IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

However, one of the clear problems with not having an explicit national language policy is revealed when we look at teacher education.

On p74 of the 1996 World Bank Staff Appraisal Report that sets out the Structure of the Initial Training Curriculum for Teachers contains only a compulsory requirement of 2 hours per week for Second Language II (Sinhala/Tamil). This is to be offered in the Second Semester (total Semester Hours 32) of the First Year of the General Area of Curriculum.

There is no indication as to what the expected outcome of such a short course might be. Given the very short time allowed for the course (and its location within the General Area of the Curriculum) it is clear that Colleges

cannot prepare teachers of the second language via this mechanism. Therefore the consultancy that I have been engaged in has written a Language and Intercultural Education Syllabus for those 32 hours. This aims to bring about awareness among all future teachers, language and non-language teachers alike, to issues of language and diversity in Sri Lanka and more widely in global terms. In addition three syllabuses for training teachers of Sinhala to Tamil pupils and Tamil to Sinhala pupils have also been prepared along with Lecturer's Guidebooks, work-books for students and vocabularies, implementation suggestions for administrators and other materials. The syllabuses are for 212 hours but can readily be expanded to full majors if there is demand and need for this.

It is now up to policy makers to decide whether the training of teachers will proceed along these lines.

In the field of second language education the claim that bilingualism leads to intercultural empathy is an old one. Unfortunately, the reality is that language education in many parts of the world addresses the technical dimensions of grammar, communication and vocabulary in isolation from culture, and intercultural relations. I now discuss the relationship between language and intercultural sensitivity.

3 RELATION BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

Language educators have long claimed that benefits of combatting racism, prejudice and intolerance would emerge (as if by magic) from learning the languages of others. This is grossly naïve. There are multilingual bigots and culturally sophisticated monolinguals. For some people learning the languages of those they dislike has merely enabled them to articulate dislike in two languages rather than one.

Some people are very dubious about claims that language learning can do anything whatever to enhance inter-group tolerance. Cynics say that language teachers always trot out the old line about inter-group tolerance whenever their position in the curriculum is threatened.

However, there has been quite a lot of research to test these ideas. Inter-group tolerance is a 'big-time' problem in many countries, and in many of these conflict has been largely language based. The following are six broad conclusions that I think we justify from the research evidence over many years.

1 Bilingual education is vastly better than foreign language teaching methods at achieving **bilingual proficiency**;
2 On its own bilingual proficiency **does not necessarily** lead to a more positive regard between the two main groups in a society;
3 Compared to other options (such directly trying to teach empathy) bilingualism in education **is more effective for more learners** in dispelling assumptions that human differences are automatically a problem, and in dispelling attitudes of mistrust and suspicion towards that which is not the same;
4 When languages are taught with a strong intercultural emphasis in which the learner is engaged personally such study contributes to inculcating positive attitudes of acceptance and tolerance;
5 Bilinguals are more likely than monolinguals to accept language differences positively seeing differences as other and equally acceptable ways of different human groups doing the same things;
6 In those cases of bilingual proficiency which do lead to much more positive attitudes and relationships these effects tend to last longer than the positive effects gained in courses that teach culture or positive values without teaching language.

To 'know a language' is very a complex matter involving many interrelated layers of **knowledge and skill**. However, and very importantly, language is also **behaviour** and behaviour is **cultural**. **Using** a language is more complex than simply **knowing** a language, because effective language use depends on appropriate cultural knowledge and competence.

It is sometimes assumed that cultural sensitivity will emerge inevitably from linguistic competence. In recent years it has become increasingly clear that culture competence does not necessarily flow automatically from the learning of a second language. It needs to be taught in its own right.

The most general aim of second language education is to achieve *communicative competence*. Communicative competence is made up of several related but distinctive parts: Grammatical competence, ie knowledge of the language code (pronunciation, vocabulary, rules of grammar, writing and its conventions); *Sociolinguistic competence*; mastery of how to use the code; *Discourse competence*; the capacity to combine language structures into a variety of coherent and cohesive texts e.g., poetry, and political speech and *Strategic competence*; ability to enhance communication through knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies.

Intercultural language teaching moves beyond these kinds of language competencies.

The learner can no longer be viewed as a **defective native speaker**, but rather must now been seen as a **user** of language drawing upon the resources available to him/her. The language learner uses language creatively in order to communicate. As such, language cannot be considered just to be a set of purely linguistic skills. Rather the language learner needs to move beyond what s/he perceives and to discover how s/he functions within cultural boundaries. This is core of the process of moving towards a bilingual norm.

All competencies in language are shaped by the culture that has given rise to the language and which is communicated **through** the language. Culture therefore is central to language and to second language education. What have been the approaches to teaching culture within second language education?

3.1 TEACHING CULTURE IN LANGUAGE

In the past there have been four theories of how language is best taught which have constituted ways in which teach culture in language as well.

The Civilisation Approach: In the Civilisation approach culture is taught

separately from the teaching of a second language. Culture is treated as a set of facts or phenomena and taught as content within a curriculum of its own. Culture therefore is an object of study and not an activity that learners engage in as part of gaining second language skills.

The Audio-Lingual Approach. The language curriculum aims to produce grammatical correctness in the learners and assumes that culture is a separate matter altogether which can be studied after linguistic competence has been achieved.

The Communicative Approach. This approach to second language education aims to have learners communicate in the target language and assumes that culture can influence communication. In this approach culture refers to non-linguistic knowledge that is required to enhance linguistic communication. So culture is only taught where it is needed for pragmatic communication.

The Intercultural Approach. In this approach to culture language itself is seen as a cultural practice, or a 'system of signs'. Teaching language therefore necessarily involves teaching culture. Language and culture are inseparable. For intercultural teaching it is necessary to conduct research into the actual use of the target language to uncover all the specifically cultural ways in which the target language differs from the source language, the language of the learners. Such research reveals that language and culture are inextricable. As research uncovers culturally specific ways to communicate it also indicates how to teach the culture of the target language and of the source language. This is therefore an approach of interculturalism. (Murphy 1988).

Recent studies of culture in language education have identified internationalisation, economic globalisation, travel, information exchange, the Internet as having an impact on perspectives on culture in language.

4 approaches in language teaching practice and culture in newly emerging contexts of multi-ethnic societies in all parts of the world and through internationalisation are now apparent:

- The *foreign-cultural* approach (losing ground since the 1980s)
- The *intercultural* approach (the main approach today).
- The *multicultural* approach (emerging in multi-ethnic societies)
- The *transcultural* approach (emerging in all societies as a result of internationalisation). (Risager 1998).

The *foreign-cultural* approach assumes a single culture for a single foreign country in a specific territory and isolates the culture of the language being

taught from the learners' culture. The aim tends to be to teach admiration for and knowledge of this foreign culture.

The *intercultural* approach is based on contrasting the target culture and the learners' culture, noting similarities and disimilarities.

The *multicultural* approach is found in societies with many different cultures and languages. It seeks to impart common and shared knowledge within respect for and maintenance of differences. Some forms of multicultural approaches seek hybrid connections between the existing cultures and see culture as a set of practices that members of these societies can add to existing notions of culture.

The *transcultural* approach stresses that cultures penetrate each other and are not discrete, single entities in bounded nation states. By this definition of culture, and by this approach to teaching culture in language is influenced by migration, tourism, economic internationalisation. Languages and cultures interact with each other, they influence and borrow practices and customs from each other and so on. Increasingly we live in an internationalised cosmopolitan world, we can eat foods from anywhere, enjoy the art of any tradition, adopt ideas and religious practices, forms of dress, speaking and belief systems from any part of the world and in effect construct unique and ever more diverse cultural forms. Languages can carry many cultural practices, English for example is spoken and used by Sri Lankans in distinctive ways, but Sri Lankan English is mutually intelligible with British, Scottish, Irish, Australian, Canadian, South African, or German, and Japanese kinds of English. English itself therefore is a language of multiple identities and carries multiple cultural loads as well as being a convenient and advanced tool of global communication.

What kinds of competencies can teacher trainees gain in cultural awareness? Teacher education should aim at the following three competence levels for all future teachers, not just those of languages. I call these dimensions since while we can teach them in sequence learners' responses may well follow pathways very different from the rote order in which we offer them.

3.2 DIMENSION ONE: CULTURAL RECOGNITION

In the first intercultural competence the learner gains an insight into the influence of culture on their everyday life. Recognising the cultural dimension of everyday life involves seeing people's behaviour as being influenced and shaped by culture, and not as random, idiosyncratic or perverse.

Self-knowledge is the first part of this. By systematic observation and study

we can gain self-knowledge and come to recognise how pervasively culture shapes our lives.

3.3 DIMENSION TWO: INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS

Recognition is the important first step towards the goal of intercultural competence. However on its own recognition is insufficient. Teacher education should aim to extend this awareness to others' attitudes and behaviour, skills, knowledge, interests and to see that these are also culturally shaped. If **our** lives are influenced by the culture of which we are a part then this must also be true of others' lives and culture. Therefore culture is something that we 'take for granted', something which is as assumed and 'natural or normal' for others as it is for us.

When we communicate we draw on our cultural assumptions to get messages across to others or to interpret the messages we receive from them. When we are communicating across different cultures, cross-cultural communication, we should bring some of these assumptions into the open and discuss cultural differences. Such negotiation across culture can lead to skills in effective cross-cultural communication. Over time we can learn to predict points of possible difference between cultures. We can develop skills in effective understanding and communication across cultures. We will know how to interpret some of the actions and statements of others in a better light, and how to understand better some of our own actions and statements.

From recognising the cultural dimension of ourselves teacher education should progress learners into being competent in encounters with others from different cultures.

3.4 DIMENSION THREE: MULTI- CULTURAL CREATIVITY

The third competence aim for teacher education for all teachers is that of creativity within difference. At the first level we **recognised** ourselves as cultural beings. In the second we **extend** this insight into others and start to reflect on how interactions across cultures can be more efficient and more effective when we communicate and act with respect and knowledge.

In multicultural environments new forms of culture emerge. We can call these hybrids. Hybrids emerge because in the contemporary world there is vastly expanded contact among peoples in all parts of the world. Rice eating may originally be Asian but it is now universal, Buddhists can be found in Norway and Argentina, just as there are Catholics and Methodists in Indonesia

and Botswana. Australians can speak Tamil or Sinhala just as Sri Lankans may learn Icelandic. Dress types are changing, jewelry wearing and artistic design patterns are shared across the world, when cuisines interact the practiced taste traditions (the cultures of eating) which were specific to given environments become combined with other traditions of which they were not originally a part. Japanese food aesthetics and taste preferences are popular in England and California as are the classic Italian salads and sweets in Japan and Thailand.

Under the multicultural creativity competence teacher education moves trainees towards appreciating the **mixing** of cultures and of the rich traditions that are increasingly available in the contemporary world.

4 HOW TO TRAIN TEACHERS OF INTERCULTURALISM

4.1 ETHNOGRAPHY

The first and continuous method used in training teachers of language and interculturalism is

Ethnography, i.e. the method that anthropologists use in field work. Ethnography is one key methodology that can be used to achieve the kinds of intercultural competence that I have identified requires. Ethnography requires trainees to become trained observers of their own language and cultural behaviour. The general approach is to have learners acting as 'scientists of culture'. Just like professional anthropologists who analytically describe cultures and languages different from their own in a systematic way the use of ethnography in teacher training for interculturalism requires learners to focus on their own and on others' cultural and communication behaviour.

The techniques will include keeping a systematic regular diary to monitor their own cultural and communication experiences, producing a personal language history and map, guided reading and research and group focus discussions.

Trainees learn to work in teams as well as individually and aim to prepare outcomes of their research that seek to make in understandable to others, for example by preparing information for foreigners on aspects of Sri Lankan culture, communication and social/economic life. The preparation of such information will require conducting interviews with key members of communities within Sri Lankan society other than the one that the trainee belongs to.

4.2 EMPATHY

A second method is the use of empathy for teaching. Empathy is the psychological state that interculturalism aims for as well as a method of teaching. Empathy has been described as a cool head in a warm heart.
Empathy breaks down in societies:

- when there is too much emphasis on unity (leading to pressure for assimilation);
- when there is too much emphasis on differences (this leads to pressures for separation); or,

- when there are rapid or severe swings between too much unity and too much difference.

There are two basic steps that are essential in teaching empathy. The first is to **identify and recognise distinctions** and the second is to *integrate these distinctions into a larger whole.* (Lohrey 1998: 8-9)

Specifically, individual differences are recognised and then integrated into the larger whole of collections of individuals (school or class groups, families); school or class groups and family differences are integrated into common patterns of culture and community. In turn these differences are integrated into common patterns of economy and society, which in turn are seen to be distinct from other economy-society patterns but are integrated at a higher level into wider and deeper common patterns of humanity.

To teach empathy via these two steps of identifying distinctions but then merging them into larger wholes we need to make conscious efforts at extending the boundaries held by learners. Boundaries are usually cognitive (what we know about ourselves and others) and identity boundaries (what we attach ourselves to and how we feel about such attachments). Training teachers of language and culture requires guidance to trainees in examining their own experiences of culture as unique, but to then proceed to integrate these into wider patterns of Sri Lankan society and the world beyond Sri Lanka.

By identifying the process of teaching empathy in a systematic and careful way teacher educators can help trainees deal with both the personal and the intellectual challenges of cultural diversity.

4.3 CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

The final part of training teachers of language and culture involves what will be taught. I will not discuss here the content of language programs that trainee teachers need language proficiency in the target language, and language methodology knowledge. Instead I will focus on culture, the envelope within which language use occurs.

Culture is not seen as a fixed entity that can be taught as a series of facts. Nor is culture seen as an entity that all members of a culture share fully, or equally. Rather, culture is seen as complex and dynamic, with some aspects of culture being challenged from within the culture itself. Culture is best understood as containing at least three elements the **'archaic, residual** and **emergent cultures'**. (Jayasuriya (1992 [after Williams (1977:63)].

This definition is useful because it avoids two common but unacceptable tendencies in discussing culture. The first is to overstate the importance of culture and to consider culture as fixed and rigid. Humans are certainly shaped by culture but we are not *prisoners* to our culture. We overstate the importance of culture when we suggest that the pattern of behaviour, beliefs and values that we inherit from the past **determine** what we are able to do in the present. When there is conflict between different cultural groups the differences between these groups sometimes seem to lock them into inevitable and permanent conflict and misunderstanding, as if they are prevented by their cultures from ever interacting effectively with each other.

The opposite extreme is also unacceptable. This neglects the importance of culture altogether as though culture has little impact on daily life and people's behaviour, relegating culture to arts or high literature. If we deny the importance of culture then we explain conflict only in terms of economic, political or individual differences.

The **archaic culture** refers to *tradition and identity.* This connects people to the historical patterns of the past. The past is drawn on in the present when we look for identity and connection with the events, values and experiences that have shaped our society over long periods of time. Often the archaic culture is found in present communication in the form of *common sense.* Common sense is a sort of everyday philosophy in which we interpret the circumstances or events in the present according to how these were interpreted in the past. Sayings, proverbs, popular wisdom etc are forms of the archaic culture alive in the present and when we use a proverb we actually validate a past, or archaic, way of responding to something that happens to us today.

The **residual culture** refers to the *current patterns of behaviour,* those that we are living today. Our general everyday way of life as well as the artistic and literary forms of culture are included here.

The **emergent culture** refers to how we *make culture in the present.* We enact and communicate culture, drawing from the archaic patterns and the residual patterns. In all our daily practices we draw on what we know, and what we assume and take for granted, to achieve our purposes. Because each context and each moment is unique this dimension of culture is therefore dynamic. It is always changing. In this way we can impact on and change cultural patterns. We subject culture to challenge, contest and development.

New words enter the language almost every day. These reflect and make changes in the culture. Languages borrow from other languages and in this

way cultures also develop and change. New words are one way that language influences culture and is influenced by it.

From this discussion it is clear that some parts of culture are **observable** and some parts are not. While we can identify readily arts, crafts, dances, habits, dress, customs, language as **phenomena of culture** there is a vast field of culture that is not observable. Some of the non-observable culture will involve: perceptions of events, beliefs about the past and about what is caused by what forces and how, norms of behaviour, social roles, assumptions we make about the right way to do things, values, expectations about politeness and courtesy or directness and indirectness, orientations to time, physical space, styles of learning etc. These **non-observable aspects of culture** are often assumed to be the 'the normal way that things are', or 'just life'.

If we approach the culture concept as consisting of knowledge or as high art and literature we place too much emphasis on the role of written language and the formal registers in which literature and art are encoded. Seeing culture **as practice** restores an emphasis to spoken language and informal registers where culture is enacted in the daily lives of language users. It is in conversational interaction that culture becomes immediate for the participants.

The non-observable parts of culture are often considered not to be culture at all, but just to be the normal way to do things. When we do this we *naturalise* our culture. Naturalising culture means that we consider what is in fact cultural behaviour to be 'just life', or the 'normal thing', or the 'natural way that things are'. Because in other cultures the same things we do are done differently neither 'our way' nor theirs can be considered *natural*. We have an insiders' (the 'emic' perspective) experience of our culture. We are inside it and it is inside us. Others' culture is 'etic', it is outside of us and we are outside of it. For this reason we cannot teach culture awareness without involving learners in self-knowledge. Culture is never inert knowledge, we are involved in it, personally.

Ethnocentric judgment, stereotyping and even racism can arise because the culture concept is very complex and submerged within the practices of life. It can be easier to appreciate the art or architecture of another culture, and to see great buildings, paintings, dances, or costumes as *culture*, than to see everyday life as being cultural.

The notion of culture offered above, and the idea of teaching towards difference, do not intend to unsettle learners or to remove them from comfortable competence within the contexts of their lives in villages, towns or

cities in Sri Lanka. The notion of empathy and the construction of learning about others is intended to be based as primary and necessary, on self-knowledge and appreciation as well as other-knowledge and appreciation.

4.4 THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF 'LANGUAGE'

How we view language can have implications beyond language teaching. Language learners are *language users* and language use is complex and has many dimensions. The "language" which language teachers teach must consider the complexity of language and move beyond traditional views of language that come from within linguistics.

Most importantly, language in intercultural education is seen as something beyond the linguistic code. Grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary are not the only knowledge language learners need; as language users leads us to a view that language is more than a code. The complexity of language is not recognised by adding new modules, such as pragmatics, discourse, etc., to the code, but rather by recognising that the linguistic code itself is **situated practice** as well as object.

If language is more than the code, the language user is more than the idealised 'speaker-hearer' and language use is not located within the individual. Language is *inherently* interactional. Any utterance at any moment is constructed through the interaction of the speaker and the hearer and attends to changes in speaker and/or hearer. Moreover language in use is both shaped by context and shapes context. Each contribution grows out of what precedes and determines what proceeds from it. Like we need a dynamic view of culture we also need a dynamic view of language.

The important recognition which grows from this is that culture is inherent in language. This is the idea that every time we say something we are performing a cultural act. As such we cannot treat culture as an additional component to be taught with time allocated to "culture" as if too were an additional module tacked onto the code. Rather culture is inseparable from the code.

5 CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning I spoke of an implied but not explicit national policy on languages for Sri Lanka. In this paper I have only addressed one part, a crucial and critical part, but only one. Such a policy would explicate the national communication needs in English, in foreign languages such as Japanese, Hindi, German and French, and in languages of intellectual, historical and religious significance to Sri Lankans, in all their diversity, I mean here Pali, Sanskrit, Arabic and Latin.

Explicit policies are preferable to implied ones. We can review, monitor and change explicit policies in a more reasoned and pragmatic way that we can with implied policies.

However, in my talk I have also spoken of language **as** culture. Of course language is not just culture, it is also straightforwardly communication, and here the traditional territory of the language teacher is well known: grammar, communication, correctness, form and usage.

Once language is seen as more than the linguistic code and the relationship between language and culture is seen as synthetic and organic, such a view of language has implications for the ways in which the enterprise of language teaching is conceived.

To see language as culture is to see that we are all part of communities of practice, that we reside in professional, personal and preference communities; and that economic globalisation and the emergence of transnational forms of citizenry offer those of us lucky enough to enjoy them expanded opportunities to belonging to wider worlds. Teaching and teachers are the bridge for these opportunities to wider numbers of young people, and we must dedicate ourselves to those most disadvantaged so that more can participate.

In intercultural language teaching, the teacher has responsibility to provide opportunities for students to develop their own intermediary place between their own culture and that of the target language community.

Training teachers of language and culture is therefore much more than a technical exercise in language teacher preparation. ..

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ENDNOTES

1 A Giant Step for Ethnic Harmony, Daily News September 16 1999 page 1; Sinhala, Tamil Students to learn Each Others' Languages from Next Year, The Island, 17 September 1999, page 3; Teaching Languages: Daunting but not Impossible, The Island, Saturday 18 September 1999 page 6.

2 Languages 'of the people'

3 Language of Wider Communication

Some children's views of why it is important to learn Sinhala and Tamil, to achieve Swabhasha bilingualism,:

If I want to start a business in central province in Nuwara Eliya then I must communicate in Tamil

In order to bring peace we must learn this language (Tamil)

I want to learn Sinhala because it is of my country

In my country we are having two languages and I must know them

It is a problem to have two languages because each thinks his language is better. If we had one language there would be no communal riots

There are a lot of books in Tamil and to get this knowledge I must read Tamil

We need Tamil to build peace in the island

Make peace in Sri Lanka.

On the tea plantations there are Tamils.

Because there are two languages in Sri Lanka and each must know the other. Only then will there be interaction

Just as much as Tamil is my mother tongue I want Sinhala to be my father tongue. To be clever I must know English too.

I have Sinhala friends

In Colombo I must know Sinhala

Sinhala is a very important language for the Tamils

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